

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

CE NO.

STAT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Economic - Engineering industry, shipbuilding
Political - Communist Party

DATE OF INFORMATION 1952

HOW PUBLISHED Political - Commun Monthly periodical

DATE DIST. 2 Sep 1952

WHERE
PUBLISHED Warsaw

NO. OF PAGES 3

DATE
PUBLISHED Jun 1952

LANGUAGE Polish

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Nowe Drogi, Vol. 6, No 6 (36), 1952.

MINISTER POINTS UP SHORTCOMINGS
IN POLISH ENGINEERING INDUSTRY

The following information is taken from one of 28 commentaries made by dignitaries of the PZPR (Polish Workers' Party) at the Seventh Plenum of its Central Committee, held 14 - 15 June 1952. Each of the commentaries is an amplification of President Bierut's opening speech and was presumably edited by Nowe Drogi.

In the following commentary by Julian Tokarski, Polish Minister of Engineering Industry, the outspoken and specific nature of the criticism of the engineering industry, i.e., shortcomings of the shipbuilding industry and the weakness in managerial personnel and management, may be of particular interest. Furthermore, the reference to the intensity of the "political and class struggles...on the coast" may be noteworthy.

The engineering industry is decisive in the development of all branches of industry and agriculture. The development of the engineering industry indicates the general level of technical development, which in turn measures Poland's defense potential. This branch of the economy has grown very rapidly since the spring of 1951. However, there have been serious deficiencies in the engineering industry, especially in the uneven fulfillment of production plans.

In organization and technology, the shipbuilding industry is the most backward of all the branches of the engineering industry. Insufficient attention was given to the work of the shipyards and the tasks of the Centralny Zarząd Przemysłu Okretowego (Central Administration of the Shipbuilding Industry). We did not appreciate the fact that at the political and class struggles were particularly keen on the coast and in the shipyards. They still are. Management did not appreciate the fact that organizational and technical means, as well as party work, must all be sufficiently developed for the fulfillment of plans and tasks assigned by the party.

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President Bierut's report emphasizes that we must desist from using emergency stopgap techniques as a method of operation. The operation and methods of our ministry are just that. When one part of the industry begins to lag, we give it all our attention and neglect the other parts. For example, the production of agricultural machinery was limping along. After 5 months of concentrated effort, the quantity and variety of products came up to expectations and the quality was also improved. The "Ursus" plants functioned poorly last year; after much attention, they succeeded in fulfilling the production plan for tractors for the last 4 months. During these months, however, the shipbuilding industry did not fulfill its plan. The Stalin Enterprise in Poznan, one of our largest, lagged behind until May this year. In May it fulfilled its monthly plan for the first time in 1952.

The development of the engineering industry requires new forms of organization. The disparity between production and demand for castings must be eliminated.

The needs of the entire economy require new and modern tools, tooling devices, and precision instruments. Production of these in turn, demands a rapid organization and development of industries producing tools and precision instruments.

Too little attention is being devoted to management personnel. Their work is treated in a perfunctory manner. After an agency chooses a director, the matter is dropped. We forget that the director of a plant, especially of a large one, is burdened with a tremendous responsibility. He is responsible for public property. He is also an arm of the state and the party. We must insist that a director perform his tasks fully.

On the other hand, we have been lax in training and helping him in his work. Our education and training do not prepare him for the responsibilities of his position. The party echelons -- municipal, powiat, and wojewodztwo committees -- usually tend to reduce their contact with directors to merely listening to the reports of the latter. No doubt this is an important and necessary job. However, such reports are inadequate when they become a collection of figures and technical indexes. Party echelons are inclined to be indifferent to problems touching upon policies, wages, and care of workers; industrial sanitation and safety; training of new personnel; the younger workers; etc. Very often the minutes of a wojewodztwo meeting during which the director's report was made are indistinguishable from those of a central administration or ministry meeting.

We must remember that the majority of our directors came up from the ranks. Their professional knowledge, while adequate for a worker or technician, is often deficient for the greater responsibility of a director. Their political education, too, leaves much to be desired. This situation places an exceptionally responsible assignment before the party organizations and ministry, namely to raise the qualifications of directors and extend their social awareness.

We have the task of intensifying political work with all the personnel in the higher echelons. By raising the political awareness of directors of central administrations, directors of departments, directors of institutes and bureaus of engineering design, etc. we shall find it much easier to deal with a wide variety of problems.

A few words about our efforts to shorten the production cycle are in order. The production cycle has two phases: the work period, when the commodity undergoes processing, and the waiting period, in which the commodity is in transit from one operation to another. A production cycle begins with the first operation on material in its raw state and is completed when the end product is the finished commodity.

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Shortening the production cycle is the basic requirement for the further development of machine production. It is one of the hidden reserves of our industry. Production cycles are quite long in the Polish engineering industry. For example, it takes several months longer to build a ship than a well-organized production cycle calls for. To shorten the cycle, it is necessary to introduce new organization, new technology, new methods, and a smooth flow of production.

The building of socialism takes place in the midst of sharp class conflicts. Besides diversion, sabotage, and surviving class interests, there is frequent evidence of opportunistic and bourgeois theories. These, if not opposed or liquidated, are dangerous. All theories inhibiting our advancement in production call for stringent action.

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